“Currency of a Different Species: The Political Economy of Glory in Eighteenth-Century France”

Humanities Research Centre Seminar
Tuesday 1 September 2015, 4.00 – 5.30pm

Speaker

Professor Robert Morrissey, University of Chicago, USA

HRC Conference Rm 128, A.D. Hope Building #14, Australian National University

What is it with the French and glory? How is it possible that Napoléon could believe that he could found a true political legitimacy upon it? From the very foundation of the French monarchy, glory was always a fundamental value. Enlightenment thinkers reworked the concept of glory to make it compatible with elements that would be at the heart of the French Revolution. The economy of glory came to be seen as a powerful alternative to the Anglo-Saxon vision of a commercial economy and a way of overcoming the Revolutionary divide separating the Old Regime from the new Republic.

Professor Robert Morrissey is Benjamin Franklin Professor of French Literature, and the Committee on Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities at the University of Chicago. Situated at the confluence of literature and poetics on the one hand and ideology and politics on the other, his research concentrates on themes and cultural currents over the longue durée. His work is thus aimed at defining the parameters of these themes and exploring the tensions they play out on a range of levels: the descriptions of the intimate moments of rêverie; the political and cultural affirmations derived from the foundational “myth-history” of Charlemagne; the origins and development of a specifically French discourse on glory that serves a key legitimating function for both self and Nation.

His publications include L’Empereur à la barbe fleurie: Charlemagne dans la mythologie et l’histoire de France (Charlemagne and France: A Thousand Years of Mythology), which received the Grand Prix d’histoire Chateaubriand, La Rêverie jusqu’à Rousseau, and Napoléon et l’héritage de la gloire (The Economy of Glory: From Ancien Régime France to the Fall of Napoleon). “He is also Director of the Project for American and French Research on the Treasury of the French Language (ARTFL) and of the France Chicago Center.”

Presented by

School of Literature, Languages and Linguistics
ANU College of Arts & Social Sciences

Enquiries

Colette.Gilmour@anu.edu.au

This lecture is free and all are welcome

Please visit our website for further information:
sll.anu.edu.au/

CRICOS # 00120C